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**TESTIMONY OF COMMUNITY PARTNERS IN ACTION
IN SUPPORT OF
S.B. 366: AN ACT CONCERNING THE ERASURE OF RECORDS IN
DELINQUENCY & FAMILIES WITH SERVICE NEEDS MATTERS**

Chair
James Sicilian, Esq.

Executive Director
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Submitted to the
Judiciary Committee
March 10, 2014

CPA Programs

- BRAVE Juvenile Community Residential Program for Boys
- GRACE Juvenile Community Residential Program for Girls
- Hartford Community Court
- Hartford AIC at Washington Street
- Hartford AIC at Windsor Street
- Hartford Transitional Housing
- Juvenile Community Service
- Juvenile Recreation Services
- Manchester Alternative In the Community
- Prison Arts
- Project STARR, HPPG
- Resettlement
- SAGE Juvenile Secure Community Residential Program for Boys
- SOAR Juvenile Community Residential Program for Boys
- Washington Street Juvenile Secure Community Residential Program for Girls
- Waterbury Alternative In the Community
- Work Release

Good afternoon Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, and members of the Judiciary Committee. This testimony is submitted on behalf of Community Partners in Action in support of raised S.B. 366: *An Act Concerning the Erasure of Records in Delinquency and Families with Service Needs Matters*. Community Partners in Action is a nonprofit organization serving individuals with who have been involved in the criminal justice system helping promote their re-involvement in the community and restore their dignity. Five of our programs exclusively serve the juvenile population. All of the youth we work with are awaiting adjudication and/or are detained, youth who will directly benefit from the passage of this bill.

In keeping with the mission of our organization, we urge you to pass S.B. 366. Youth involved in the juvenile justice system already have multiple obstacles in their path and numerous strikes against them. They struggle with self-confidence and doubt their ability to become productive members of our society. By ensuring that their record is automatically erased, this bill will serve to remove one of those obstacles, helping to free up their path for a brighter future. It will help these youth reclaim their self-confidence and reintegrate into their communities more readily. S.B. 366 establishes automatic erasure only for those youth who have committed non-serious juvenile and families with service needs offenses, after their record has been clean for two years. It will not benefit youth who have committed serious juvenile offenses.

The current process for juvenile record erasure for those youth who have committed offenses is too cumbersome for the typical youth we encounter. They are already struggling to have their basic needs met and to access complicated systems to support their physical and mental health. Removing the requirement for them to file a petition for record erasure is an essential measure of rehabilitation. If we don't facilitate automatic record erasure, we are asking these youth to be accountable for poor decisions they have made long before their pre-frontal cortex is fully developed.

Community Partners in Action urges you to give our youth a real second chance, one that they deserve, by passing S.B. 366.

Respectfully submitted,

Doreen Thompson, Program Operation Director, Juvenile Services

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